



Billing Code 4154-01

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

### **Administration for Community Living**

Announcing the Intent to Award a Single-Source Supplement for the National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Administration for Community Living (ACL) announces the intent to award a single-source supplemental to the current cooperative agreement held by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) for the National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment (NCBOE). The purpose of the NCBOE is to provide technical assistance to states, Area Agencies on Aging, Aging and Disability Resource Centers and service providers who conduct outreach and low-income benefits enrollment assistance, particularly to older individuals with greatest economic need for federal and state programs. The administrative supplement for FY 2022 will be for \$2,931,502, bringing the total award for FY 2022 to \$14,431,502.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information or comments regarding this program supplement, contact Margaret Flowers, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, Center for Integrated Programs, Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling; telephone (202) 795-7315; e-mail

[Margaret.flowers@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Margaret.flowers@acl.hhs.gov)

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This supplemental funding will expand the NCBOE's outreach and education efforts targeting older adults with the greatest economic need, especially people from underserved communities. The NCBOE will build on current efforts to reach and assist beneficiaries, including expanding the work of the Benefits Enrollment Centers, making enhancements to the benefits eligibility and screening tool, and expanding the capacity of the

benefits call center. As part of this work, the NCBOE should reflect on the equity assessment conducted in 2021 to identify specific strategies to reach and enroll beneficiaries in rural communities, who are under 65, with limited English proficiency, from tribal communities, from communities of color, and/or from other historically underserved and marginalized communities. Additionally, the NCBOE should explore ways to educate counselors and low-income beneficiaries about possible Medicare Advantage supplemental benefits.

The NCBOE maintains an information clearinghouse on best practices and cost-effective methods for finding and enrolling older individuals and people with disabilities with greatest economic need. This clearinghouse includes research that could help inform and support the work done by the network. The NCBOE should consider new research topics, such as exploring the impact COVID-19 had on their health and finances or predictors of Medicaid utilization, to help agencies better understand the populations served. The NCBOE should also build on the work done to date to educate individuals who are dually eligible by conducting an evaluation of the My Care, My Choice decision support tool and its usage by beneficiaries and/or counselors.

**Program Name:** The National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment (NCBOE)

**Recipient:** National Council on Aging (NCOA)

**Period of Performance:** The award will be issued for the current project period of September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023.

**Total Award Amount:** \$14,431,502 in FY 2022

**Award Type:** Cooperative Agreement Supplement

**Statutory Authority:** The statutory authority is contained in the 2006 Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, as amended by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, and reauthorized by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014, Bipartisan

Budget Act of 2018, and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, and Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

**BASIS FOR AWARD:** The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is currently funded to carry out the NCBOE Project for the period of September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025. Much work has already been completed and further tasks are currently being accomplished. It would be unnecessarily time consuming and disruptive to the NCBOE project and the beneficiaries being served for the ACL to establish a new grantee at this time when critical services are presently being provided in an efficient manner.

NCOA is uniquely placed to complete the work under the NCBOE grant. Since 2001, NCOA has been the national leader in improving benefits access to vulnerable older adults. They have an unparalleled history of working with community-based organizations to develop and replicate outreach and enrollment solutions, while maintaining and enhancing technology to make it easier and more efficient to find benefits. NCOA through NCBOE accomplishes its mission by developing and sharing tools, resources, best practices, and strategies for benefits outreach and enrollment via its online clearinghouse, electronic and print publications, webinars, and training and technical assistance.

In addition, NCOA has BenefitsCheckUp which is, by far, the nation's most comprehensive and widely-used web-based service that screens older and disabled adults with limited incomes and resources and informs them about public and private benefits for which they are very likely to be eligible. Since the BenefitsCheckUp was launched in 2001, nearly 9.9 million people have discovered \$42.7 billion in benefits. In addition to the focus on Low-Income Subsidy and Medicare Savings Programs, BenefitsCheckUp also includes more than 2,500 benefits programs from all 50 states and DC, including over 50,000 local offices for people to apply for benefits; and more than 1,500 application forms in every language in which they are available.

NCOA is successfully meeting all programmatic goals under the current NCBOE grant.

Dated: May 6, 2022.

Alison Barkoff,  
Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary.

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